

Fort Sisseton Commission Meeting
February 15, 2018

The Fort Sisseton Commission met February 15, 2018 at Fort Sisseton State Park. The meeting was called to order at 12:30 pm. Commission members present were Glen Johnson, Eileen Warzeka, Mary Dunn, Judy Gulleason, Duane Hemmah, Gary Strand, Bill Hoskins, Jim Patrick, Sid Schroeder, Doug Eidahl, Marshall Damgaard, Karie Geyer, Kirk Jones, and Bruce Prins. Department of Tourism personnel present were Kirk Hulstein and Neil Wagner. GFP personnel present were Katie Ceroll, Bob Schneider, Wayne Winter, Al Nedved, Willy Collignon, and Lori Skadsen. Emily Kiel attended by teleconference. Minutes taken by Dalaine Pleinis.

Willy introduced new commission members Doug Eidahl and Marshall Damgaard.

AGENDA ITEMS

GOVERNANCE MEETING: Willy presented and reviewed the Commission's Executive Order and By Laws outlining the commission's directive for marketing, promotion, and preservation efforts at Fort Sisseton.

MOTION BY SID, 2ND BY BILL TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AS PRINTED. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

FOUNDATION REPORT – Wayne reviewed and explained the Foundation Report.

OLD BUSINESS:

Harvest Fest, Haunted Fort and Frontier Christmas: Lori reported on attendance from the late season events. The numbers were in line with previous years (Harvest Fest – 75, Haunted Fort 50-60 in the afternoon and 80-90 in the evening and Frontier Christmas – 400).

Geothermal System Update: Lori updated the commission on the repairs and maintenance done by CDJ on the Geothermal units. CDJ has also helped Matt learn the levels that need to be checked.

Calendar Update: Judy reported that about half of the calendars sold at Frontier Christmas. There are still some to be sold.

The new Newsletter is being received well. Discussion was held concerning expanding the mailing list.

NEW BUSINESS:

Fee Adjustments- Bob informed the commission that camping fees at the Fort have increased. The campground has been updated to a Prime campground due to the number of camping nights. Fees increased to \$21 per night for electric and \$17 per night for nonelectric. The \$4 daily entrance fee was eliminated in all parks. Daily entrance fees are \$6 per vehicle. The cost of renting the South Barracks has been increased from \$300.00 to \$500.00 for Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

PLAYHOUSE UPDATE: Eileen informed the commission that the 2017 season was a success. The NFP board is planning on having a place to sell tickets at the Festival and is exploring other promotional avenues.

MARKETING AND PROMOTION EFFORTS: We have placed more generic ads this year to advertise not only the Festival but the Fort all year long.

Emily presented ideas as to how to target and broaden our visitation demographic.

To be effective advertising, information and marketing needs to be fundable, findable, accessible influential and sharable.

Kirk Hulstein shared the advantages of a co-op effort with the Dept. of Tourism including giveaways, virtual tours, cross selling, and shared social media space. It is a chance to draw new people and provide interpretive innovations.

FESTIVAL PLANNING EFFORTS were discussed. A Saturday activity for the Rodeo arena was mentioned. Changes to the Chuck Wagon event were also discussed.

Discussion was held as to the future direction and goals of the commission. A Marketing Planning group was established comprised of Doug, Bruce, Jim, Judy, Kirk Jones, Bill and Willy.

The next meeting was tentatively set for noon Tuesday April 3rd.